

Your submission to Proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags

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Submitter Type:

Clause

1. Do you agree with the proposed mandatory phase out of the sale or distribution of single-use plastic shopping bags in New Zealand, including those made of degradable (eg, oxo-degradable, biodegradable and compostable) plastic? Why / why not?

Position

Yes

Notes

We used glass and paper products prior to plastic and there's no good reason why we can't use them again. I think we should also ban cling wrap and plastic bags that are used as rubbish bin liners.

Clause

2. We have proposed a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags. This could include under 50 microns or under 70 microns in thickness. If you agree with a mandatory phase out, which option do you prefer, and why?

Position

less than 70 microns in thickness

Notes

Why target certain businesses only? If supermarkets need to phase out the use of plastic shopping bags, then all retailers should.

Clause

3. Are you aware of types of single-use plastic shopping bags that should be exempt from a mandatory phase out?

Position

Yes

Notes

I believe that currently the biggest focus is on supermarket plastic shopping bags, but other retailers are also being considered.

Clause

4. Do you currently manufacture, sell, provide or import for sale or personal use these types of single-use plastic shopping bags:

Position

No

Notes

Clause

5. Should smaller retailers be exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

I am a small business owner and have a trade show coming up in September. Most booth-holders at trade shows have giveaway bags that are made of plastic. Although it is more expensive for my business, I have chosen to go with paper bags this year at my booth. If retailers (small, medium and large) feel strongly enough about reducing or eliminating the use of single-use plastic in their businesses, they will make the decision to act and will find ways to make it happen while staying profitable.

Clause

6. If smaller retailers are exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags and they are defined by their number of full-time equivalent employees, what should that number be?

Notes

I don't think the number of employees should make a difference.

Clause

7. The proposed mandatory phase-out period for single-use plastic shopping bags is at least six months from when regulations are Gazetted, subject to consultation. Do you agree with this timing?

Position

No

Notes

People are currently very aware of the need to eliminate single-use plastics and should be working towards achieving that now,

instead of waiting until legislation forces them to make a change. The phase-out period should ideally not be allowed to drag out too long once regulations are in place.

Clause

8. Do you agree that the benefits expected from implementing a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags exceed the costs expected from implementing the phase out? Why / why not? Please consider both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits (those that can be measured by money as well as those that can't).

Position

Yes

Notes

The environmental cost of the growing problem of plastic waste is going to be far worse on us than the financial cost of leaving things as they are. And the environmental cost will ultimately end up as a financial cost if the situation is not addressed, when governments start raising taxes to pay for remedial efforts.

Clause

9. Do you think that reasonably practicable alternatives to single-use plastic shopping bags exist in New Zealand? Why / why not?

Position

Yes

Notes

Multi-use non-plastic shopping bags and paper bags. I lived in the USA for a few years and they still use paper bags at the supermarket checkout. And newspaper can be used instead of rubbish bin liners.

Clause

10. How can people be encouraged to reuse multiple-use shopping bags enough times to offset the environmental impacts of producing them? (select one or more)

Position

Other (please specify)

Notes

I don't think you can use a plastic bag often enough to offset the environmental impact. I have read that it costs the environment more to produce a paper bag than it does a plastic bag, however the post-use environmental impact of a paper bag is far less.

Clause

11. What would help you and your family adjust to life without single-use plastic shopping bags?

Notes

A sense of responsibility regarding the impact we have on our community and larger environment. A ban on plastic bags is not going to work if the individual doesn't care to change also.

Clause

13. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions about the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.

Notes

I hope the proposed phase-out will be put into action quickly and what we're seeing isn't just lip-service while it's a hot discussion point. We can't let this drag on for years while people debate the best way to handle it.